

Remarks**I. Interview**

Applicants thank the Examiner for conducting a telephonic interview on November 29, 2006.

During the Interview, the objection to the limitation “independent entities” was discussed. In addition, the limitations of claim 1 were discussed in light of the cited art (Timmins, Simpson). Possible amendments to claim 1 were considered, as discussed below. No agreement was reached.

II. Status of the Claims

Claims 1-6 and 8-47 are pending in the application. Claims 13-40 and 44 have been allowed. Claims 6 and 7 have been objected to. Claim 1 has been amended. Claim 7 is cancelled. Claims 45-47 are added.

III. Objection to Specification under 37 CFR 1.71

The specification has been objected to under 37 CFR 1.71 because the specification allegedly does not provide support for the limitation of a plurality of “independent” entities. The applicants respectfully submit that the objection is unfounded. The limitation “independent” has been deleted from claim 1 and included in new claim 46.

The Specification provides an example of a method for generating and utilizing a personal dialing queue, at pages 9-10. In the disclosed example, a call is received from user named Mr. Bartok, who requests suggestions of shoe stores in Annapolis, MD which sell boots. (Page 10, lines 1-2). In response, the operator searches one or more databases to obtain listings

that satisfy Mr. Bartok's request. (Page 10, lines 2-4). The operator may search, for example, one or more public national directory. In this example, the results of the search include the names of "several shoe stores, e.g., Annapolis Shoes & Boots, Freddy's and the Footlocker." (Page 10, lines 9-11). The search results are shown in Fig. 5. As shown in the figure, each of the stores listed has a different respective telephone number.

It would have been apparent to a person of ordinary skill in the art that, in the disclosed example, the three stores produced by the search are separate, independent shoe stores. Thus, in contrast to the example provided in paragraph [0081] of Timmins, in which a home telephone number, a business telephone number, and mobile telephone number for a person named "Bob" is retrieved in response to a search, the telephone numbers obtained for "Annapolis Shoes & Boots," "Freddy's" and "The Footlocker" constitute a plurality of telephone numbers "associated with a plurality of independent entities."

IV. Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-6, 8-12, 41-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0029567 (Timmins). Applicants have amended claim 1 and respectfully traverse the rejection.

Amended claim 1 defines a method for providing an information assistance service. Claim 1 requires, in part, "receiving, by an information assistance provider, a call from a caller, the call including at least one criterion and a request that the information assistance provider identify one or more entities satisfying the at least one criterion," and "conducting a data search, based on the at least one criterion, in response to the information assistance request." Claim 1 has been amended to require repeating the following (a) through (e) one or more times before the caller's call is terminated: (a) "selecting a first telephone number from the record;" (b)

“establishing a first communication by connecting the caller’s call to the first telephone number;” (c) “detecting a predetermined call status condition relating to the first communication;” (d) “in response to the predetermined call status condition, selecting a second telephone number from the record different from the first telephone number;” and “establishing a second communication by connecting the caller’s call to the second telephone number.” As mentioned above, the term “independent” has also been deleted from claim 1.

Support for amended claim 1 is found at page 9, line 11 to page 10, line 21, for example.

Timmins discloses a system for providing services over a communications network including private directory and calendar data synchronization, identity pre-validation, etc.

[Abstract] A user may create, maintain or access one or more contacts folders containing the names and contact numbers of friends, business associates, etc. [0081] At the caller’s request, an operator may retrieve the contact number of a person specified in the user’s contacts folder and connect the caller thereto. In one example in Timmons, an operator retrieves from a user’s contacts folder various telephone numbers (home, business, mobile, etc.) associated with an individual named “Bob,” in response to a request. [0101]-[0104]. The operator can connect the user to one, and only one, of the retrieved telephone numbers. If the line is busy, that same telephone number, and only that number, may be called again. [0115]. Other retrieved numbers are not called.

Simpson discloses a directory assistance system to provide search results to a user in response to a request for listings in a specified category. In a disclosed example, a request is received from a user for listings in a “business category” such as “flower shops.” (Paragraph [0062]). The user may connect to the system and submit the request via a cellular telephone, for example. [0026]. A search is performed based on the category specified by the user. [0073].

Other criteria, such as the user's location, may also be considered during the search. [0071].

The results are ranked and presented to the user. [0078]-[0081]. The results may be presented to the user verbally via the user's communications device, for example. [0055]. The operator does not connect the user to any of the retrieved numbers.

To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, the cited prior art references must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. (Emphasis added). MPEP 706.02(j). Neither Timmins nor Simpson teaches or suggests selecting a first telephone number from a list and connecting a caller to the first telephone number, and subsequently selecting from the list a second telephone number "different from the first telephone number," and connecting the caller to the second telephone number, during a single telephone call to an information service provider, as required by claim 1. (Emphasis added). As the Office Action points out (on page 3), and as discussed above, Timmins discloses no more than attempting to connect a user to one, and only one, selected destination telephone number, multiple times. Simpson does not disclose connecting a caller to a destination telephone number found in a search, at all.

The applicants respectfully submit that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is, therefore, improper. Accordingly, claim 1 and its dependent claims (2-12, 41-43, and 45-46), are patentable over the cited art.

V. Claim Objections

Claim 7 has been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, new claim 47, which combines the limitations of claim 1, as originally presented, and claim 7, is added. Claim 7 has been cancelled.

VI. New Claims 45-47

New claim 45 depends from amended claim 1 and further comprises “generating a record containing a plurality of telephone numbers resulting from the data search and meeting the criterion, the telephone numbers being associated with a plurality of entities, respectively.” Support for new claim 45 is found at pages 9-10, for example.

New claim 46 depends from claim 45, and further recites “wherein the telephone numbers are associated with a plurality of independent entities.” As discussed above, support for new claim 45 is found at pages 9-10, for example.

For the reasons set forth above, amended claim 1 is patentable over the cited art. Therefore, new claims 45-46, which depend from amended claim 1, are also patentable over the cited art.

New claim 47 combines the limitations of claim 1, as originally filed, and claim 7. As discussed above, claim 7 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, new claim 47 is allowable over the cited art.

VII. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, each of claims 1-6, 8-12, 41-47 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of these claims is requested and allowance of the application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: December 14, 2006

By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brandon N. Sklar", written over a horizontal line.

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